THE DISSEMINATOR

Nova Scotia Provincial Library

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3770 Kempt Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 4X8
(902) 424-2457; FAX (902) 424-0633

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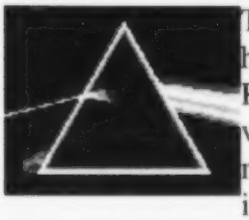
WESTERN HEALTH INFORMATION PROJECT (WHIP) UPDATE



This unique partnership aims to provide a combination of local and general consumer health intelligence via a WWW site. Jackie MacDonald, Regional Librarian, Western Regional Health Board, manages the web site and compiles its information from a variety of sources. The Western Counties Regional (Public) Library also delivers this much needed information service by making it available free of charge to the public at its branches. The library has received excellent feedback from its clients, who make over 3000 health-related enquiries every year. WHIP has recently been nominated in the "Smart Organization/Partnership" category of the Smart Enterprise Awards created by NovaKnowledge.

LIBRARY - NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

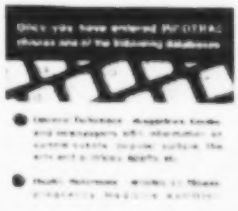
If you have recently used the NcompasS web-based catalogue at http://ncompass.library.ns.ca/ you will have noticed a new addition - the catalogue of the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. The library is located at 1701 Hollis Street on the 3rd floor and provides information services to the staff of the Department, the public, and to those who work in the natural resource sector from 8:30 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday. Prospectors, forestry consultants, and students are among the library's regular users. The collection covers geosciences, mining engineering, forestry, parks, recreation, wildlife, energy, land use, and sustainable development. The nature of resource information necessitates the collection of a wide variety of formats: journals, newsletters, books, maps, aerial photographs, and mineral exploration assessment reports.

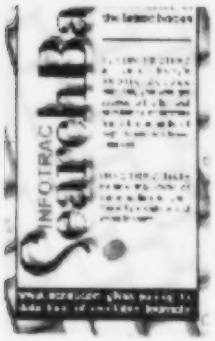
Certain parts of the collection are particularly popular with the public, including the province's most comprehensive collection of historical aerial photographs, a unique collection of historical maps at http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/library/histmaps.htm, a complete set of the department's geological publications, forestry maps produced from a departmental Geographic Information System (GIS), and a public GIS station that allows library users to create and plot customized geoscience maps. A perennial favorite among prospector clients is information about Nova Scotia's Gold Districts. All of the department's geoscience publications are distributed or sold through the library. Among the library's newest products are maps of the province's Wilderness Areas.

The library has five staff, . some responsibilities overlap, but in general, the staff is as follows: David Colborne (Head Librarian), Tracy Lenfesty (Cataloguing and Interlibrary Loans), Linda Robinson (Maps and Aerial Photographs), Karen Fraser (GIS & Serials), and Dolly Williams (Publications Inventory). The public can only borrow materials via Interlibrary Loan. There is no cost for loans or photocopies obtained via ILL. For more information please visit the library's web site at http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/library.htm or phone (902) 424-8633.

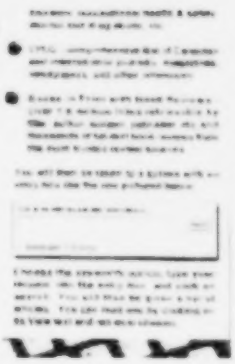
REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES "REFERENCE CONTACTS" MEETING

In December 1998, the regional libraries "reference contacts" came together to discuss the status of the web based reference services now available at all of the public libraries. The meeting provided a focus for some interesting discussion on how the Infotrac databases are being used. Additional promotion of the databases will likely help to





boost their use amongst library patrons. Reference training for staff in Pictou-Antigonish now include using both print resources and as the online databases. There definitely seems to be a realization that as the technical aspects of library automation are conquered, library staff can turn to new ways of offering information services to the public.



CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA - "INTEGRATING GOVERNMENT WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES '98"

Marion Pape served on a panel with Andrew Reddick of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and Ken Roberts, Chief Librarian of the Hamilton Public Library. The following article titled "Listening to the Library" was written by Fred Belaire on the conference with a particular slant on the libraries session. It will be published in Silicon Valley North, an Ottawa based publication with a national subscription base of 80,000.

"We will make the knowledge and information infrastructure accessible to all Canadians by the year 2000, thereby making Canada the most connected nation in the world. This will provide individuals, schools, libraries, small and large businesses, rural and Aboriginal communities, public institutions and all levels of government with new opportunities for learning, interacting, transacting business and developing their social and economic potential" *Speech from the Throne, September 23, 1997.*

Public libraries are quiet places to go and read, right? Wrong, they are becoming community information highway on-ramps. "Canadians, Public Libraries and the Information Highway", by Ekos Research Associates commissioned by the Canadian Library Association, confirms the growing importance of Canadian public libraries as access points to the Information Highway. "The findings of the study confirm that public libraries continue to be both a major information resource and an equalizer in making information widely accessible," says National Librarian Marianne Scott.

I discovered this study by attending Integrating Government with New Technologies '98, how Policy Drives Technology, one of an excellent conference series produced by Riley Information Services Inc. For me the conference provided a context that amplified the signal of the library's important new community role. The earlier plenary sessions had focused on the supply of government information (e.g. a conversation with electronic information officers). Some new technologies to enhance access to this government supply of information were then explored (public key infrastructure and digital signatures). By the afternoon the breakaway session began to move beyond supply considerations (information push) to the nature of the demands (knowledge pull).

In subsequent discussions it was suggested that governments needed to develop a competency for "intelligent listening". It was noted that the private sector was placing increasing emphases on customer capital, defined as the value of the customer relationship. It was suggested that the governments might benefit from an equivalent concept, namely citizen capital, defined as the value of the citizen relationship. The plenary session moved on to the potential community role of libraries as listening posts

and effective knowledge delivery systems. Provincial and municipal presenters envisioned the potential.

Marion Pape, Provincial Librarian, Nova Scotia, provided her provinces' viewpoint on access in a wired world. She set out province-wide and community focused initiatives. The NcompasS on-line catalog assured access to library holdings including university and college collections, all public libraries, provincial government libraries and French collections. Nova Scotia Government On-line provided a single link to government services. At the community level she referred us with pride to the Chebucto Community Net, as a network for creative change. She concluded with the twin observations that the public had a right to communicate and that community development requires information skills.

Ken Roberts, CEO and Chief Librarian, Hamilton Public Library, provided a large-municipality perspective on the potential new role for libraries. He quoted survey evidence that people who used library Internet terminals tended to have one at home. "They wanted librarians to help them find relevant information." He pointed out that his profession is skilled in organizing massive amounts of information." We know the need for controlled vocabularies mixed with natural language. We know how to create horizontal menus that free us from vertical information silos." He concluded that libraries need to operate on a simple rule of thumb, applicable to any organization "people will continue to use us so long as they have a reasonable chance of being successful when they do use us." He left us to contemplate the irony that "electronic resources allow us to access far more information than ever before while creating unacceptable line-ups and delays in reaching these resources." We need to listen to and at our public libraries.

HACKMATACK AWARD

Children in Atlantic Canada will have one more thing to celebrate in the year 2000. This will be the inaugural year of the **Hackmatack Children's Choice Award**. This award is designed to promote reading by children in Atlantic Canada and to recognize fine writing. There are many prizes for children's books which are selected and awarded by adults, including the Governor General's Awards and the Ann Connor Brimer Award. While these awards recognize outstanding children's books, they are not chosen by their intended readers. The Hackmatack Award gives children the opportunity to read and vote for their favourite Canadian and Atlantic Canadian books in region-wide "elections."

Many partners in the school, library, book and literacy communities have been working hard to make the dream of an Atlantic Children's Choice Book Award a reality. A selection committee are preparing the shortlist of twenty fiction and non-fiction books. From this high quality list of Canadian and Atlantic Canadian books, children will choose their personal favourites. This program is based on the Silver Birch Award founded by the Ontario Library Association and developed from a parallel undertaking by the Texas Library Association. Since its inception in 1994, the Silver Birch Award has grown tremendously, with over 37,000 children involved in 1997.

Children in grades 4, 5 and 6 will begin reading in the fall of '99 and will vote to select their favourites in April 2000. An award ceremony to celebrate the winners will take place in Halifax in May of 2000. For more information about the Hackmatack Children's Choice Book Award contact Carol McDougall, Project Administrator, 3770 Kempt Road, Halifax, NS B3K 4X8, phone 424-2453, fax 424-0633, e-mail mcdougac@gov.ns.ca

HOT HOT TIPS

Starting a Small Business

Canada-Nova Scotia Business Service Centre at www.cbsc.org/ns/ has re-vamped and enhanced its site to include significant business/government web sites for Nova Scotia and links to similar pages for the other 3 Atlantic Provinces. There are also links to Statistics Canada and Strategis, 2 main sites you may have already bookmarked. Don't forget that there are still useful government publications in print, and the regional public libraries are depositories for many of these.

The Nova Scotia Economic Renewal Agency at **www.gov.ns.ca/ecor/** is another site that may help you to start up a small business. Publications include "How to Prepare a Business Plan".

Searching the WWW effectively

The purpose of LibraryNet, an Industry Canada web site, is to help Canadian libraries connect to the information highway and to one another. However, there is lots of current information that is relevant to anyone searching the Internet on a regular basis. Tips for comparing search engines can be found by visiting the following website **http://www.schoolnet.ca/ln-rb/e/training/search.html**

Rocket eBooks Available

Did anyone get an electronic book for Christmas? Nuvo Media, the parent company of Rocket eBooks, has announced that they are available. You can order one of these new gadgets from Barnes & Noble online, along with title "refills" at **http://www.barnesandnoble.com/** or call toll-free 1-800843-2665.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Nova Scotia Provincial/Regional Libraries Annual Report, 1997-98

Hot off the press!! If you would like a copy of this annual report, please contact Debbie Ross at the Nova Scotia Provincial Library at 424-2457 or email rossdl@gov.ns.ca.

Brimer Bowling for Books, March 13, 1999

Join writers, booksellers, librarians and other literary bowlers for the annual fundraiser for the Ann

Connor Brimer Atlantic Children's Literature Book Award. Literary Costumes! Prizes! This year's them is "Fractured Fairytales, or Some Enchanted Evening, eh?" It will take place again at Fairlane Bowling Alley, Halifax Shopping Centre, March 13 from 6.30 to 9.30 p.m. If you'd like to find out how to sign up, please contact Janice Fiander at 490-5720 or email bejf1@nsh.library.ns.ca.

Electric Library/Nova Scotia Library Association(NSLA) Contest Reminder!

Electric Library is an electronic journal database which has a strong market in the schools in the U.S., and is beginning to expand into Canada. It does have some Canadian content, and will be increasing this proportion in the near future in order to be more competitive with other databases. Between February 15 to 28, 1999, the Nova Scotia Library Association (NSLA) and Electric Library Canada will be co-sponsoring a contest for all library staff and library students in Nova Scotia. This contest will be run from the NSLA homepage at **http://www.library.ns.ca/nsla**. All the contest details will be posted here shortly. For two weeks, you will have free access to the subscription database from Electric Library Canada. You have simply to answer a few questions using the database and submit your answer online. That makes you eligible to win the $250 first prize Roots certificate for yourself and up to $250 cash for the library/school from which you submit the answer (prizes randomly drawn from correct responses).

This contest is brought to you by the NSLA as a professional development opportunity to discover how such databases operate. For more information, email Ron Bulmer at trrb1@nsh.library.ns.ca. By the way, only NSLA members qualify for the prize money! For details on joining NSLA, e-mail Janet Channing, NSLA membership chair at mhjc1@nsh.library.ns.ca.

TRAINING NOTES

InfoTrac and Web NcompasS Training Road Trips

During December, InfoTrac and Web NcompasS training continued to be offered at public libraries throughout Nova Scotia.

Carrying new bookmarks and pamphlets, Michael Vandenburg and Craig Cormier met a number of wonderful people and demonstrated the features and benefits of these two new databases. They travelled to Guysborough County and met with people in Mulgrave, Petit de Grat, Guysborough and Canso branches. Michael (standing) is pictured above with Terri Morse, Ira Andrews and Donna Paris (left to right), at the Guysborough Branch Library. In the second photo, Craig and Terri talk about some of the features of Infotrac.

Training then moved to the Shelburne area where both trainers continued to enjoy meeting library staff at the Shelburne, Lockeport, Barrington Passage and Clark's Harbour branches. Training for the month ended with a large group session in Amherst. In January, training sessions are taking place at the South Shore and Colchester-East Hants Regional Libraries.

These photographs show the range of the trips across the province, from libraries like the Drs. Coady & Tomkins Memorial Library (left) to the Barrington Branch Library (right).

Fairwinds Training Session

Staff of NS Provincial Library attended an all day "Team Building" workshop on December 16th, 1998. This was the final session in a series of three workshops. The workshop facilitator was Brenda Fair of Fairwinds Training.

LINKed

As February is African Heritage Month, formerly known as Black History Month, the featured Internet sites in this month's **Linked** column are those which provide information oriented to the black community, especially from the perspective of African Nova Scotians. Pictured here is Taylor Baldwin, at a computer terminal in the Dartmouth North Regional Library.

During the month of February, the Department of Education and Culture will be doing some activities related to African History Month, focusing on Nova Scotians and Canadians where possible. Check out the website at **http://is.dal.ca/~acswww/dalbh.html**. Students looking for additional resources should check out the February is African History Month site at **http://www.ednet.ns.ca/educ/schoolpages/aves/afrhis.html**. It hosts a large collection of links including local ones.

The Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia site at **http://home.iSTAR.ca/~bccns/** has a *Traditional Lifetime Stories* section, which has information about the lives of some members of the black community and there is a link to Black Culture Interactive at **http://is.dal.ca/~bcichair/index.html** . This site was started as a result of the James Robinson Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies at Dalhousie University with assistance from the Black Cultural Centre/Society of Nova Scotia and Dalhousie's Academic Computing Services. There is information on African-Canadian history and a multiple choice game about events and people in African-Canadian history. Unfortunately there are a few parts of the site that need updating. In the Links section, the links to *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month* and *Dalhousie University* no longer work and in the Events section, last year's *African Heritage Month*

events were listed. Two of the links, *Church* and *Arts/Culture* were under construction.

The James Robinson Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies site at **http://is.dal.ca/%7Ejrjchair/jrj/** has a *Learning Activities* link where there are several interesting word game activities.

Shades of Black : The Best Books on the Black Experience in Canada by Nancy Sparks and Jane Thornley at **http://www.umanitoba.ca/cm/cmarchive/vol22no1/shadesofblack.html** is an article from Volume 22 Number 1, January/February, 1994 of CM: A Reviewing Journal of Canadian Materials for Young People which is now called CM: Canadian Review of Materials at **http://www.umanitoba.ca/cm/** .

The Portia White Home Page at **http://www.ac.wwu.edu/~jay/pages/pwhite.html** gives a detailed account of the singer's life with many pictures. It is based on a lecture delivered to the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society.

The Black World Today at **http://www.tbwt.com/** is a highly acclaimed electronic magazine run by a coalition of black journalists, writers, artists and entrepreneurs in the U.S. and abroad. The site has black news and views with an international focus. There are different departments such as Business, Commentaries, Entertainment, Features and Food.

EverythingBlack.com at **http://www.everythingblack.com/cgi-bin/search/directory.cgi?** is a searchable directory of Web sites of interest to Black people put on the Internet by The Freedom Group, Inc., Atlanta, Georgia. The sites are organized under subject categories and subcategories. If you have any suggestions about future topics for this column please contact Carol Morris at cmorris@nshpl.library.ns.ca .

REFERENCE ON THE NET

The Nova Scotia Provincial Library found answers to the following questions using Internet resources.

Q. The patron wants consumer information on Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

A. At the *Infoseek* search engine page **http://infoseek.go.com/** click on the *Automotive* subject category. Then under Explore by type click on *Motorcycles*. When you scroll down there is a list of Motorcycle web sites. One of the sites listed here is Motorcycle Online **http://www.motorcycle.com** , an online magazine and resource center for the motorcycle enthusiast. At the bottom of the homepage there is a section titled *Bike Reviews* including an archive of past reviews. Reviews for a number of Harley-Davidson motorcycles are given here.

Q. Would like information on the long-term effects of carbon-monoxide poisoning.

A. The question "what are the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning?" was entered at the natural language search service, *Ask Jeeves* at **http://www.askjeeves.com** . *Ask Jeeves* provided a page of relevant information from a consumer health site called **thriveonline.com** . *Ask Jeeves* also provided a metasearch which brought up links from four other search engines.

PROFESSIONAL READING

Compliments of the season to all! Are you now settled in at work and in a mood to do some serious

professional reading? To help you out in this regard, see these reviews of two of our latest books from Neal-Schuman Publisher's. You can borrow these from our Professional Collection.

Schneider, Karen G. **A practical guide to internet filters**. New York: Neal -Schuman, 1997 (Call # Prof. 025.04 Sch).

The author of this book discusses issues concerning internet content filters as practical tools. The author does not take a pro or con stance but rather discusses the various features of the filters and leaves the basic decision on what filters to buy or indeed whether to use any at all, up to the reader. The book is comprised of 8 chapters, with detailed appendices, one of which lists the basic questions which should be asked when evaluating filter performance.

Smith, Mark. **Collecting and using public library statistics: a how-to-do-it manual for librarians** (How-to-do-it manual for librarians, No. 56). New York: Neal-Schuman , 1996. (Call # Prof. 027 .473 Smi).

The author ' s purpose is to change the perception that the collection of library statistics is a tedious, bureaucratic burden, to one where this task is considered a valuable exercise for the well-being of the library. He does this by making the reader understand why certain data should be collected, why it is useful and to whom it is of value. The book consists of 12 chapters, with appendices and a detailed bibliography.